

BUDGET ESTIMATES 2024

Portfolio Committee No. 5 – Justice and Communities

The Hon. Yasmin Catley MP

Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism and

Minister for the Hunter

Hearing: Friday 30 August 2024

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS TAKEN ON NOTICE

Answers due by:

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The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL: Thank you, Minister. Can you tell me how many current New South Wales police officers have second jobs?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: I would have to take that on notice. I do not know the answer to that. I'm not too sure, actually, if the police would keep a record of that either. As you know, they have to seek permission to have a second job. I guess I would have to ask you, Commissioner. Do you want to take that on notice?

KAREN WEBB: Yes.

ANSWER

I am advised:

As at 8 September 2024, a total of 1,019 police officers had active secondary employment approval.

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The Hon. RACHEL MERTON: Minister, how many police officers are there in the NSW Police Force today?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: Let me get that exact figure for you.

The Hon. RACHEL MERTON: Meaning what is the latest headcount?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: Yes. It is 16,095.

The Hon. RACHEL MERTON: Can you specify numbers for sworn and unsworn officers?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: I'll have to take that on notice and give you that. I don't have it in front of me. The number I gave you are sworn, so I don't have the unsworn numbers, but I'm happy to take that on notice.

ANSWER

I am advised:

This question was answered directly after the question was put.

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The Hon. RACHEL MERTON: How many of that number are on leave?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: Sorry, can I just come back? The administrative headcount is 4,314.

The Hon. RACHEL MERTON: Being the unsworn.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: The administrative aspect. Not authorised strength. That's correct. Sorry, what was your question again?

The Hon. RACHEL MERTON: How many of that number are on leave?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: I'll give you that before the end of the session.

ANSWER

I am advised:

A total of 737 of the 4,314 administrative employees were on leave as at 6 August 2024 (all leave types). Leave numbers fluctuate daily.

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The Hon. RACHEL MERTON: How many are on stress leave?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: My understanding is they're not necessarily in categories. It will just be on leave. I'll give you the leave number before the end of the break.

The Hon. RACHEL MERTON: How many are on sick leave?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: I can give you sick leave, yes. But they're not categorised into the type of sick leave that they're on.

The Hon. RACHEL MERTON: How many others are on paternity or maternity leave?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: I'll take these on notice and I'll give you a full list of those numbers of what can be provided from the police.

The Hon. RACHEL MERTON: How many are on mental health leave?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: Why don't you just give me the whole list now and then I'll provide it all? What other lists do you have there? Mental health—what's next?

The Hon. RACHEL MERTON: Can you provide us with numbers for the last five financial years separately?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: We might go to Mr Smith. Mr Smith, would you be able to answer that?

DEAN SMITH: For the five financial years, we'd have to take that on notice for the categories of leave that you are speaking about, whether it's long term, sick and all those other classifications, in terms of annual leave, leave without pay and all other categories, if that's what you're talking about, for five financial years.

The Hon. RACHEL MERTON: Minister, how many police are currently suspended and what are those circumstances?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: I would have to ask Mr Smith. Do you have those figures in front of you?

DEAN SMITH: I do not, Minister. That would be a professional standards question.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: Again, we'll have to take that on notice.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Number of Police Officers on Leave, by leave type for the past five (5) financial years							
Leave type	26/06/2019	24/06/2020	30/06/2021	29/06/2022	28/06/2023	26/06/2024	Avg
Workers Compensation Leave	883	864	1,098	1,261	1,571	1,512	1,198
Recreation/Extended Leave	1,293	1,088	2,355	1,470	1,457	1,213	1,479
Sick Leave	486	438	468	684	453	462	499
Parental Leave	196	208	211	280	286	342	254
Other	75	127	169	134	184	127	136
FACS Leave	61	45	31	53	51	59	50
Leave Without Pay	66	53	53	65	79	53	62
Suspended Leave	78	51	46	38	33	30	46
Secondment Leave	9	7	1	1	1	1	3
Study Leave		1	1	1	1		1
Total number of Leave for Police Officer	3,147	2,882	4,433	3,987	4,116	3,799	3,727

Note: This data is point in time as at the dates listed above. The number of police officers on leave fluctuates daily and, alongside usual seasonal variations, is also impacted by police operations and global events (e.g. COVID19). There have been adjustments to the definition of leave. For example, maternity leave has not been used since 2022 following the introduction of paid and unpaid parental leave, which is reflected below. The NSWPF's SAP HR system does not record stress or mental health leave.

As at 10 September 2024, there are 46 officers suspended (42 with pay and 4 without pay).

Circumstances:

Suspension of an officer is a risk minimisation strategy used while a matter is being investigated and a decision made as to what management action will be taken. Suspension occurs if there is reasonable cause to believe their conduct has been such as to justify:

- Section 181D removal
- Section 80(3) dismissal
- The institution of criminal proceedings

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The Hon. ROD ROBERTS: Let's go to budget estimates 2022, Commissioner. I've highlighted certain parts of the transcript for your benefit. It relates to my questioning of you in relation to the position of Constable Daniel Keneally at the time in the NSW Police Force. Do you have page 54 of the transcript? I think you have a highlighted part too.

KAREN WEBB: Yes.

The Hon. ROD ROBERTS: I'm going to shorten it up because of our time. The question was: Do you have confidence in Constable Keneally and his ability to perform a role as a police officer? We will go to the highlighted part of your answer. You say:

... he was originally suspended and he's now back in the workplace. That's something that we will have to review subject to what else happens. So you say suspended, now he's back. I ask another question. You go: Certainly, like I said, the issue of him being suspended predates me. I welcome any resubmission of a report ... On page 55, again in response to another question, you say:

I said I welcome an opportunity to review that matter. As I said, he's been reinstated in the workplace and I welcome from his chain command ... Was Keneally ever suspended from the NSW Police Force?

KAREN WEBB: I will have to take that on notice. As you point out, it's over a year or so, or two years ago, and I don't have it in front of me and I will have to take that on notice.

ANSWER

Yes

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The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL: Sorry, that's my fault. I'm jumping in. I just want to know, the budget papers say "other operating expenses". What does that mean?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: I'll refer to Mr Smith in a minute, but I—

The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL: So you don't know, Minister?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: What I want to say is that we've just had the numbers of authorised strength and how many we are down. That is a problem that we inherited. We know that there are a—

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Point of order: This is not an answer to a question that's been asked. It doesn't relate to other operating expenses.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: It relates to the police budget, so yes it does. Sorry, yes, it does.

The CHAIR: That is not a point of order. The Minister can answer or not in her own fashion.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: Mr Smith?

DEAN SMITH: In terms of the ERE versus other operating costs, employee-related expenses and salary-related expenses and items like that—other operating expenses that we look at really focus around other areas, like our insurance products. It relates to operations and other things that come into play. You're talking about leases, other aspects of the business. About 86 per cent of our budget relates to ERE, and the rest makes up other operating expenses, which is the way we go about our business to fund other aspects.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Your insurance and lease costs are 28 per cent down this year?

DEAN SMITH: I'd have to take that on notice in terms of what that question is.

ANSWER

I am advised:

The NSW Police Force lease costs are expected to remain the same in 2024-25 financial year as in 2023-24 financial year.

The NSW Police Force insurance premiums (excluding workers compensation which are disclosed as part of Employee Related Expenses) for 2023-24 financial year were \$94.6 million and the budget for 2024-25 financial year is \$102.2 million, being an increase of 8%.

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Ms SUE HIGGINSON: Minister, can I ask you to take on notice that you will provide this Committee with a really clear outline of what the steps are and what your Government is going to do to address this issue that you are looking into, to give us an idea of what we can plan for and what we can expect?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: I can't speak on behalf of my colleagues. What I can tell you is—

Ms SUE HIGGINSON: Could you speak to your colleagues and then come back?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: I will be able to provide to you police's response for police, as the police Minister, but I'm not going to speak on behalf of my colleagues. The committee has been set up. It's co-chaired, as I said to you, by the commissioner and the Secretary of Health.

ANSWER

I am advised:

The NSW Police Force is working with NSW Health to explore models for responding to mental health incidents in NSW, consistent with the principles of the United Kingdom's Right Care Right Person (RCRP) model.

A joint steering committee has been established between the NSW Police Force and NSW Health to work through the findings and develop options on an appropriate response model for mental health incidents to present to the NSW Government by the end of 2024.

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The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL: Minister, during the morning tea break, were you able to get any of the figures in relation to leave that we asked about?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: No. We'll provide all of those. Could we have all of those in writing, maybe, because you wanted so many different variances? Has somebody taken a note?

The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL: We did ask for over five years. But also now, as of today, how many police officers are on leave?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: Sure. I'll see if I've got it in here. Do you want to ask the next question?

The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL: Susan will, but if you've got just an overall figure, that would be helpful.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: Dean's got it now

DEAN SMITH: In terms of the breakdown of annual leave and others, we'll have to take that on notice, because that changes every day. People go on and off leave. Maternity leave and other types of leave, we will do. But in terms of specifically long-term sick leave, there are currently 1,362 on long-term sick leave.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Refer to the answer table on page 3 above.

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The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Minister, I wonder if you could tell me how many hand-held metal-detecting wands are in the possession of New South Wales police?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: I'll have to take that on notice.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Can you also perhaps take on notice whether they're available in every New South Wales police station.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: I can answer that. No, I don't believe that to be the case.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Do you have any idea of in roughly how many police stations they would be available?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: I'd have to take that on notice. But don't forget—I think it's important that we put this in context. They will be used for special operations. It will be that special operation unit that would have access to them. That's important to put it in that context, because that is how they are effective. That has certainly been our observation from Queensland. When they're used in certain precincts, which we have designated through legislative change, the designated operation will be in that precinct.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: To clarify, how many specialist units will there be that will be using those wands in those special operations?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: Mr Thurtell?

PETER THURTELL: Sorry, what was the question again? I was distracted.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: The Minister has indicated that there will be specialist units that will be using the electronic wands. I'm wondering how many.

PETER THURTELL: It depends on the intensity of an operation. You're talking about when the new legislation comes into effect in December?

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Sorry, there seems to be some confusion. I'm asking how available are electronic wands? The Minister has indicated that they're not, but that's not an issue because only certain police will be using them.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: Don't put words in my mouth. That is not what I said.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Then I'm happy to be corrected, Minister. But I'm trying to understand: Will every member of the NSW Police Force be able to be pulled into these operations? Will they be adequately trained and resourced? What I'm hearing now is it might only be certain members. If it's only certain members, how many certain members and where will they be located throughout New South Wales?

ANSWER

I am advised:

A small number of wands are available to police in field operations at the local level across NSW Police Force Police Area Commands and Police Districts. Individual police officers are not currently allocated wands.

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Ms YASMIN CATLEY: Can you just explain how an operation works to the member of the Committee?

PETER THURTELL: If we're talking about the new legislation that the media have been referring to as Jack's law, that legislation comes into effect in December, and the Premier has been on record as saying that the—

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Excuse me. Can we just clarify that? Has it actually been proclaimed yet?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: Procured, you mean?

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: No, the legislation.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: No. I'd have to check the date for you. I'll get back to you.

ANSWER

No.

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The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL: Commissioner, will local police be able to give evidence if they're invited?

KAREN WEBB: I will consider that, but we will be providing a response to the inquiry one way or the other. I know the Police Association will be attending to respond on behalf of its members. Certainly we may provide a written response to the inquiry.

The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL: Okay. I might come back to that this afternoon. One more for you, Minister. Do you have any updated data in terms of the number of police that have been moved from metro areas to regional areas under the incentive scheme? I think it was set up prior to your Government, but I know it continues.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: Yes, we do. The scheme? Yes, we do. I read it the other day, actually.

The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL: Are there any updated figures?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: I will give it to you. I think it was 70, 77?

The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL: I'm happy if you want to take it on notice.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: I'm happy to give it to you, so we don't have to—

The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL: Sure. I would also like you to tell me which locality they have moved to, as best you can, if possible, as well.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: It is 104 and eight further pending transfers.

The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL: Maybe on notice, can you tell me where they've been?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: Do we keep that? I'm told we've got a table.

The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL: Even better.

ANSWER

This question was answered directly after the question was put.

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The Hon. ROD ROBERTS: I'll ask some questions on notice to get to the bottom of that. Minister, I'll take you very quickly to the new Enhanced Police Support Scheme. I applaud you and the commissioner for parts of it, in particular addressing the concessional cap issue. That was a big issue for cops, so congratulations on that. However, am I correct in saying that the new program, unlike the PBRI, will not have a total and permanent disability lump sum payout?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: Mr Roberts, that is all still being worked through with Aware and Treasury and police. I'm not going to make any comment on that until such time as all of those details have been finalised.

The Hon. ROD ROBERTS: But didn't you make an announcement on 19 August? Your words were—and I'm quoting from the media release—"This is a great day for New South Wales police." You're telling me you've released a scheme that hasn't been worked out yet?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: I'm saying that the details are still being finalised.

ANSWER

This question was subsequently answered on page 48 and 49 of the Transcript.

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The Hon. ROD ROBERTS: I'll put it to the commissioner, and perhaps you'll have to take this on notice. I don't expect an answer. I've been told that since this was released on 19 August, up until today, there have been over 200 police go off sick so that they can access the old PBRI scheme—including four detective sergeants from Lake Illawarra, as I've been told. Have you got any comment to make on that?

KAREN WEBB: I've heard that number, the four. I haven't heard the 200 and I will take that on notice. What I can say, though, is that each of those claims will be viewed as contested claims because of the timing and the nature of those that align to the announcement.

ANSWER

I am advised:

The number of officers on workers compensation for injuries for the period of 19 August 2024 to 31 August 2024 is 258 and is broken down by injury type in the table below (data is based on date notified of reportable workers compensation claims).

In line with current practices and legislative obligations, the relevant insurer will determine the liability of any claim made and as part of that process will consider the timeline of events leading up to a claim.

Although it is not possible to state what relates to the change from PBRI to EPSS, the data for the same period in 2023 has also been provided for context and comparison.

Period	Physical	Psychological	Total
19 August 2024 to 31 August 2024	120	138	258
19 August 2023 to 31 August 2023	102	38	140

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Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Last estimates I asked about the functionality of the COPS system and the delays in upgrading it to IPOS. I understand that there was a tender put out and we were getting another company on board. Do we have an update on how that's going?

KAREN WEBB: I will go to Mr Smith. I think your question, if I'm correct, goes to the recording. Your interest is in the recording of reasons that victims of sexual assault are not recorded. We can't determine that data.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: No, there are two different issues.

KAREN WEBB: Sorry.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: Mr Smith is aware of that.

DEAN SMITH: In terms of where we are with IPOS, yes, you are correct: We are reprioritising and resetting the direction, not approaching it from a single-vendor perspective but with a multi-vendor approach, and looking at how we can build capability across how we can build those systems. In terms of the COPS, we are currently in phase one around undertaking the potential rescoping and timeline of the replacement. Obviously, that was set at 2027. That is pushed out to June 2029 based on where we are currently at. As I said, we are looking at a shelving police system which is capability based, so they are integrated and certainly linked. Where we currently are phasing is around the discovery and options, looking at the analysis and obviously preparing for the request for pricing for that to make sure that is correct.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: In the interests of time, can I ask you specifically about phase two, which I understand was where we were going to get that domestic and family violence functionality for the IPOS system. When is phase two happening?

DEAN SMITH: I cannot give you an answer today. I can take that on notice in terms of when it is.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Will it be after 2029, then, if phase one is—

DEAN SMITH: No, it will not be after 2029, but I will get you the phasing and the road map to do that and what that looks like. I'll be able to give you those details.

.....

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: So Minister, given that we've now put in place the coercive control offence, will there now be a focus on improving that part of the IPOS system in phase one, rather than having to wait till phase two?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: I'll get advice from Mr Smith in relation to the road map.

ANSWER

I am advised:

The IPOS Program has transitioned from the previous three-phased delivery model to a more strategic approach. This new approach focuses on rapidly delivering business-led capabilities in an incremental and agile manner, rather than through large phases. It reflects current best practices, informed by lessons learned from the IPOS Program to date and expert advice, and is supported by a modern, composable Enterprise Architecture.

As the IPOS Program progresses, this approach will provide frontline police with a single easy-to-use mobile-friendly unified interface for all business capabilities and give immediate access to data-led insights and intelligence to support the prevention, disruption, and response to crime, including domestic and family violence (DFV).

Improved DFV capabilities are key deliverables in the IPOS Program. There are over 140,000 domestic related incidents every year that officers are called to. The initial business capability currently being delivered as part of IPOS is a Domestic Violence app that will reduce time for frontline officers to record a domestic violence event and allow police to serve an Apprehended Violence Order (AVO) in the field rather than needing to return to the station.

Additional DFV business capabilities to further support victims and holistically improve the NSW Police Force response in the investigation and management of DFV will be delivered as part of the IPOS Core Operations Police System (COPS) replacement.

COPS replacement is a key IPOS priority with initial discovery work underway. The investment priority pipeline for COPS replacement places the data fabric and Investigation Management as the first deliverables and will focus on improving data capture, event

creation and case management for all crime types including the investigation and management of DFV.

In addition to COPS Replacement, the IPOS Program is currently also delivering Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) and Forensics and Evidence solutions:

- IPOS CAD is on-track to be delivered in Q4 2026 and is the core system for incident notification, police response and incident management. A core deliverable of IPOS CAD will be the introduction of mobile capability allowing police to access critical incident information and intelligence on a mobile device while responding to incidents. IPOS Forensics & Evidence system is on-track to be delivered in two releases (Q4 2024 & Q2 2025) and will deliver improved functionality for the purpose of collecting, storing and analysing forensic data assets ensuring results and intelligence can be rapidly utilised by front line police and investigators.
- Additionally, NSWPF is proactively addressing DFV through the IPOS DV Project that is on track to be delivered in early 2025. The DV Project will expedite the delivery of key benefits for DFV earlier than the previous planned phased delivery model (previously IPOS Phase 2). Benefits include:
 - Ability for police to complete the Domestic Violence Safety Assessment Tool (DVSAT) in the field using a mobile device;
 - Ability for police to create Police Issued Apprehended Domestic Violence Order (PIADVO) in the field using a mobile device;
 - Ability to create real time alerts for DV Dangerous Offenders; and
 - Ability to create DV Episode & Common Assault Event and update narratives in the field using a mobile device without the need to return to a station.

The IPOS Program is currently revising the roadmap based on the updated strategic approach (refer to the above response). The revised IPOS roadmap is being developed to ensure alignment to the outcomes and objectives of the IPOS business case, including, but not limited to:

- COPS Replacement (DFV, Child Protection, Investigation & Case Management, Intelligence Management, Procedural Justice and Regulatory Services and Crime Prevention).
- Incident Notification, Detection, response and Management; delivered by the new Computer Aided Dispatch Solution (CAD) which is currently in market and on-track to be delivered in Quarter 4 in 2026.
- Forensic, Evidence & Property Management which is on-track to be delivered in two releases (Quarter 4 in 2024 & Quarter 2 in 2025).
- Timelines in the roadmap for COPS Replacement will be informed by a market assessment currently scheduled to be conducted in early 2025.

The NSWPF has proactively made changes to the existing COPS system to support the Coercive Control changes that were introduced in July 2024. These changes include:

- Creation of a new incident category specifically for coercive control – released in July 2024; and
- Additional witness statement options specifically for coercive control – released in September 2024.

COPS changes will continue to occur to support NSW Government legislation and frameworks to support DFV whilst IPOS is being developed. The Coercive Control requirements and other improvements introduced into COPS will form part of the requirements for the IPOS COPS replacement solution.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Can I ask, similarly to last estimates, how many currently serving police officers we now have, who have, at any time, been charged with crimes related to domestic and family violence?

KAREN WEBB: I've got a number. I've got that 54 currently serving police officers have been, at any time, charged with 91 domestic violence related offences, which I have a list of.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: How many currently serving police officers have been convicted?

KAREN WEBB: Two.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: How many have been found guilty of a domestic and family violence offence but without a conviction recorded?

KAREN WEBB: I'll have to take the latter question on notice.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: That is a slight reduction from when I asked in March?

KAREN WEBB: That's correct.

ANSWER

This question was subsequently answered on page 49 of the Transcript.

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Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: In relation to offences relating to sexual violence, do you have the numbers for those?

KAREN WEBB: As at 27 August, 13 serving officers have been charged with sexual violence and none have yet been convicted. Obviously this can fluctuate due to separations from the organisation.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Okay. Of the 18 that you provided details of in March—we had 18 at that point, so we've got five less now? But there were 18 at that point who had been charged with 39 offences relating to sexual violence. Two of those charges were of sex with a person under 10 or intercourse with a person under 10, and five were charges of sexual offences with children between 10 and 16. Given that they were currently serving at the time, what is the procedure for, if someone is charged with something that significant—

KAREN WEBB: Just because it shows on our records that they are serving, so they are still attached, it doesn't mean that they are in the workplace, necessarily. When an officer is charged, there is an assessment by their commander about their interim risk, or other risk. That often results in suspension or some other form of action, sometimes pending the court outcome. Equally, as the commissioner, I can invoke parts of the Police Act that consider their employment, that doesn't rely on the outcome of the criminal proceedings. So there are times that those matters will be considered by me.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Are you able to provide, maybe on notice, just how many of them are in active duty versus—I would like to know that you've got some oversight of where those people are?

KAREN WEBB: Of the 13, I'm informed that there are two not in the workplace due to a leave situation. One officer is suspended, and there are 10 in the workplace, but I'll have to take on notice their actual duty status.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Of the 13 officers charged, 10 officers are in the workplace performing duties and the remaining three are out of the workplace (two are on long term sick leave and one is suspended).

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Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Finally, what actions, as an update to what we were told last estimates, have been taken in relation to the LECC's review of Police Force responses to domestic and family violence? Has there been any update to what we discussed last time?

KAREN WEBB: I'll have to take that on notice, or come back to you before the end of today.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: I'd like to know if there has been any movement in relation to the investigation of police by police within the same command.

KAREN WEBB: What I can say though, is that we do know that 75 per cent of investigations have been conducted by commands outside of where the involved officer

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: With the discretion of the—

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: That has been a change, yes.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: So then we still need to know about those 25 per cent. If you could give me details. Are they in regional areas? Why is it that we still have 25 per cent of cops being investigated by their mates?

ANSWER

I am advised:

The 25% of charges investigated by the home command equated to six investigations. Two of these occurred in regional areas. The community can be confident that the six investigations were carried out professionally and without conflict of interest, with compliance to risk and conflict assessments.

An additional factor to consider is that none of the officers being investigated were in the workplace at the time of the investigation, as they were either suspended, or on long term sick leave at the time of charge.

All six investigations culminated in criminal charges being filed with the courts.

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The Hon. RACHEL MERTON: In a similar situation to Revesby, I'm informed in terms of Ryde that the money was committed. The money was in place. It was a priority. It no longer stands. The view is that the Government's walked away from this. Is that the case?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: I might just have to check with Mr Smith.

DEAN SMITH: In terms of the status of Ryde, Minister?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: The question was that the money has been—

The Hon. RACHEL MERTON: Money's committed. It was at the top of the list. It was a priority. Now, there's nothing.

DEAN SMITH: I'll get the specific detail, but in terms of the acquisition of the land and the location to do that, that has certainly been somewhat problematic. At this point in time, I'll get a response in regards to the next steps in relation to Ryde and what that looks like. Again, in relation to Revesby, our infrastructure and assets command is working directly with council and others, and other parties, and meeting regularly to be able to do that. Again, in relation to that funding envelope and those repairs, I'll also provide an update to you in relation to the issues you've raised around the leaking roof and the conditions and what's been spent thus far.

The Hon. RACHEL MERTON: Deputy Commissioner, as you offered to do for Ryde there in terms of the forward plans and what's next, could we have that for Revesby?

ANSWER

I am advised:

Ryde Police Station

- Construction of a new police station in Ryde remains part of the future demand outlook and will be considered as part of the NSW Police Force overall investment prioritisation process for future funding consideration by government.

Revesby Police Station

- Revesby Police Station is part of the Bankstown Police Area Command (PAC) and contains a shopfront serviced by Bankstown PAC daily, along with Highway Patrol unit.
- \$8 million was allocated for a full refurbishment of the Revesby Police Station on its current site.
- Due to an intersection roadwork proposal, alternate works may need to be undertaken on Revesby Police Station. Consultation with stakeholders, including Transport for NSW and the local Council, is ongoing.

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Ms YASMIN CATLEY: I'm not sure what's being maintained, if there's maintenance. Obviously, they're aircraft so they need to be maintained regularly. If that's your question—what can fly in the air today—I'd have to ring up and ask. But, as I say, they have five helicopters and three planes.

The Hon. RACHEL MERTON: Do you think you could possibly take it on notice in terms of what is operational today? What's not sitting in the workshop and under repair? If needed, what's available today?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: I think it's important that we note they're all maintained, because obviously we need to have them maintained like aircraft are maintained at a level that we would expect because the safety of our crew is paramount.

The Hon. RACHEL MERTON: Certainly it is a priority. Minister, was aerial support available for the 2024 Wakeley church stabbing, which clearly had a serious impact on the community?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: I'd have to ask Mr Thurtell.

The Hon. RACHEL MERTON: Was it available?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: I'd have to ask Mr Thurtell if it was available.

PETER THURTELL: My understanding is that it wasn't utilised on the night. Whether it was available, I'll have to take that on notice.

The Hon. RACHEL MERTON: Was there a delay in providing the support, or no availability?

PETER THURTELL: No, I'd have to take that on notice but, as far as I was concerned, it wasn't requested on the evening.

ANSWER

This question was subsequently answered on page 49 of the Transcript.

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The Hon. ROD ROBERTS: I'll get right to the point then. Commissioner, I've been informed from a very reliable source that the register is a recent fabrication. The NSW Police Force has an excellent—as in all the cops—cyber security unit. On notice, will you provide the metadata to this inquiry showing exactly when the entries were made on that register?

KAREN WEBB: I have provided the register. In relation to if this is going to the point of the 24 versus the 32 bottles, I had initially been advised that only 24 bottles had been gifted.

However, following the review of stock and of the gift register, I confirmed that 32 bottles had been distributed as gifts or donated for charity purposes. The gift register was attached to the media release with names redacted to protect the privacy of individuals. I have asked that the remaining 18 bottles be donated to Police Legacy for fundraising purposes.

The Hon. ROD ROBERTS: I just asked, will you provide the metadata to this inquiry—

KAREN WEBB: I don't see the need to provide the metadata given that I have—

The Hon. ROD ROBERTS: —so we can prove the authenticity of that register?

KAREN WEBB: What I'm saying is, I have a register. I've provided the register. If I was trying to mislead Parliament or anyone else, I wouldn't have provided the update. As soon as I become aware of information, and I could correct the record, I have corrected the record.

The Hon. ROD ROBERTS: You had to, because the SO 52 would bring it all out anyway.

ANSWER

This question was answered directly after the question was put.

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The CHAIR: Commissioner, the Liberal member for Pittwater, Rory Amon, has just been charged with child sex offences—five counts of sexual intercourse with a person over 10 and under 14 years old. Commissioner, can you inform us about the processes and charges in relation to Mr Amon's charging today?

KAREN WEBB: I will take that on notice.

The CHAIR: He is currently in custody awaiting an appearance in court. Will the police support an application for bail from him?

KAREN WEBB: That will be up to the bail sergeant.

The CHAIR: You wouldn't be instructing them in any way?

KAREN WEBB: A bail sergeant makes the determination. That's the decision of the bail sergeant.

ANSWER

I am advised:

In June 2022, Detectives attached at Northern Beaches Police Area Command commenced an investigation following reports of an alleged sexual assault in Mona Vale in July 2017. Police were told a teenage boy was allegedly assaulted by a man - who was known to him - at an address in Mona Vale.

In March 2023, Strike Force NOORAL was established to investigate the incident. Following extensive enquiries, a 35 year old man was arrested at Manly Police Station at about 6am Friday 30 August. He was charged with five counts have sexual intercourse with person over 10 & under 14, two counts attempt sexual intercourse child over 10 under 14, two counts indecent assault person under 16 years of age and commit act of indecency with person under 16 years.

The man was given strict conditional bail to appear at Manly Local Court on 18 September 2024. Inquiries are continuing.

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Ms SUE HIGGINSON: Minister, are you aware of the key recommendations and findings of the Ombudsman's 2016 report into the search powers related to FPOs—firearms prohibition orders?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: I would have to refresh my—

Ms SUE HIGGINSON: Sure. I raised this in the last budget estimates. I am very concerned about the use of FPOs. Obviously I get contacted by people who are subject to these orders. I see their cases. I just want to know what steps have been taken to implement the recommendations of the August 2016 review of the police use—

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: We might ask Mr Hudson what steps have been taken.

DAVID HUDSON: The 2016 recommendations I am unaware of, as I sit here. I wouldn't have had any visibility over the firearms prohibition order process in that time. I can say in the last few years, since I have had ownership over it, we have done a lot. We did an audit of the execution and exercise of the firearms prohibition order powers.

Ms SUE HIGGINSON: Thank you, Deputy Commissioner. Sorry to butt in. Have you found any overreach and misuse, like the report did and like a number of case studies that have come forward have done?

DAVID HUDSON: We found some anomalies that we sought to address, bearing in mind the number of FPOs that were utilised, which are quite heavy. I can't give exact numbers as I sit here, but they are heavily utilised as a crime prevention and deterrent tool. Part of the changes we made to firearms prohibition orders since 2016 and then since we inherited it three or four years ago is that they used to be centrally issued from the Firearms Registry. Now that delegation has been distributed across to regional operations managers. Recently, following that review and audit, we identified that the Firearms Registry still had a responsibility to oversight the process. I don't think they had been doing that. We've reintroduced that to make sure to give greater oversight to what the region delegates and State crime delegates are issuing. So there's a process in place to ensure accountability around it. If any anomalies are identified, they're tried to be addressed. We're currently going through a five-year review of FPOs. Police Prosecutions and Licensing Enforcement Command are in the process of allocating those out to those delegates for review. There are many FPOs out there that have never been served that need to be withdrawn.

Ms SUE HIGGINSON: How does that happen? How can one just be out there and it's not served?

DAVID HUDSON: If someone is arrested in the interim. If, after the order is taken out, they're arrested for an offence, it will remain unserved and they need to be withdrawn. There's certainly some work to do there, which we're undertaking. We've self-identified that. But I can give you a more qualitative answer on notice, if you'd like.

ANSWER

I am advised:

The audit/review has not uncovered any overreach and misuse. The execution and exercise of the orders and powers have been judicious, prudent and considered.

In relation to Firearms and Weapons Prohibition Orders that are unserved, there are a number of reasons they can remain in unserved status for some time.

These reasons are as follows (and not limited to):

- Person named unable to be located by Police (not at last address etc);
- Person named avoiding service;
- Person named in custody on remand or serving a sentence;
- Person named moved interstate or overseas;
- Person deceased.

In all cases, if Police are unable to effect service of the FPO/WPO on the person, it would essentially be waiting for an interaction between the Police and the person. There would be

warnings on that person to indicate that an FPO/WPO is awaiting service. Once served, the status would change from unserved to served.

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The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL: Thank you for that clarification. Sorry, I'm jumping around a little bit because we'll get through a lot of different things in the five or 10 minutes we've got. Minister, I wanted to ask you about Bendemeer Police Station, just outside of Tamworth. There are issues there with mould in the residence house. I believe it has been unmanned for at least 12 months and there's no police officer there at the moment. Do you have an update on that station and what's happening in Bendemeer?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: I'll have to take that on notice.

The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL: Do any of the officials know?

KAREN WEBB: If it's a police house, it'll be a Property and Development NSW concern. If it's the police station then it'll be under our maintenance schedule.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: Is it the house?

The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL: My understanding is it has been unmanned. I think there is mould in the house, but also that the station has been unmanned and there's no police officer there either. I think it might go across both.

KAREN WEBB: We'll take that on notice, then.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Bendemeer Police Station and the police residence are a single building under one roof. Mould was identified and the single unit officer vacated the premises for rectification. The entire building was remediated and is now available to re-occupy.

The previous occupant has relocated having been assigned a new position in Tamworth. The newly identified local officer has yet to formally take up duties in Bendemeer.

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The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Minister, you've just released the annual report card on the National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032, which calls for the implementation of the recommendations of the Auditor-General's report about the New South Wales police response to domestic and family violence. What money is allocated in the budget to implement these changes?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: Are you referring to the Commonwealth report?

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: No, I'm talking about a report that is part of your plan. You're a signatory to it, and part of that plan says that the New South Wales Auditor-General's report about the police response to domestic and family violence should be implemented. It's one of the action items, so I'm wondering what money has been allocated to make sure that can happen.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: I'll take that on notice.

ANSWER

I am advised:

The NSW Government will invest \$245.6 million as part of an emergency package to enhance support for domestic and family violence victim-survivors and expand programs that reduce the rate of violence against women and children.

This includes:

- \$45 million to improve justice system responses to domestic violence and improve bail laws so it's harder for those accused of serious domestic violence offences to get bail.
- \$5.5 million in 2024-25 to expand the Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service (WDVCAS) hearing support and Police co-location pilot programs.

\$24.1 million for WDVCAS to meet the increasing demand of victim survivors requiring support to navigate the justice system.

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The Hon. ROD ROBERTS: Lots of things have happened here today that people aren't attributed to. How many vests are missing?

DEAN SMITH: I'll have to take that question on notice.

The Hon. ROD ROBERTS: I asked how many are unaccounted for. What was your answer, again, I'm sorry?

DEAN SMITH: I will have to take that on notice.

The Hon. ROD ROBERTS: You don't know?

DEAN SMITH: Specifically, no. I do not know.

The Hon. ROD ROBERTS: You don't tell me that over the last couple of days that you guys didn't swat and cram for all the questions you were going to get from me today and you didn't think to consider, "Oh, he might ask us a question about the vests"?

The Hon. STEPHEN LAWRENCE: Point of order: I think this was taken on notice, wasn't it, rather than a denial of it.

The CHAIR: You need to withdraw that. It was taken on notice.

The Hon. ROD ROBERTS: I withdraw. What's the value of the vests that are unaccounted for?

DEAN SMITH: I'll have to take that on notice. I'm not aware of that.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Six vests have been reported as missing over the last five years, four of which have been recovered. Since October 2023, when the Police Armoury was assigned responsibility for managing ballistic vests, there has been a significant number of vests returned to the Police Armoury that had not been identified or accounted for in the previous 2022 audit.

As such, the NSW Police Force is unable to advise an exact number of unaccounted for vests at this time, nor the associated costs. The NSW Police Force is undertaking a further organisation wide audit.

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The Hon. ROD ROBERTS: The Act says: A person who possesses a prohibited weapon must take all reasonable precautions to ensure—

- (a) its safe keeping, and
- (b) that it is not stolen or lost, and
- (c) that it does not come into the possession of a person who is not authorised to possess the weapon.

ou won't tell me how many are missing, but we'll find out eventually. You know that. You're just dragging it out a bit, but anyway—

DEAN SMITH: That's incorrect.

The Hon. ROD ROBERTS: There is a number missing, stolen or lost. We don't know. Nobody will tell us. Has the Police Force breached 32A of the Act?

DEAN SMITH: Without specific reference, I'd have to take that on notice, but I do not—

The Hon. ROD ROBERTS: Please take it on notice then. It's brought to my attention that a number of these vests may be expired in terms of their warranty. Is that correct? Sorry, let me be more specific: not the lost vests. The vests that are issued to our men and women on the front line, some of them have passed their expiry date in terms of their shelf life as warranty provided by the manufacturer. Is that correct?

DEAN SMITH: As to the warranty provided by the manufacturer, yes.

ANSWER

No, the NSW Police Force has not breached 32A of the Act.

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The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Commissioner, I have some questions about Operation Foil. Are they best answered by you? I'm happy to address them to whoever they're best directed to.

KAREN WEBB: Ordinarily those operations are conducted by a police transport command in the metropolitan area. However, if you want to ask a question and I'll decide where—

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: I'm wondering how many times would Operation Foil have been conducted over the last year?

KAREN WEBB: We would have that data. I'll hand to Mr Thurtell.

PETER THURTELL: I'll have to take that on notice. Over the past 12 months, I would estimate on four occasions. However, I can't say that with any certainty.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Did I understand you correctly, Commissioner, that they're conducted by a metropolitan-based command? Is that right?

KAREN WEBB: Mostly, but that's not to say exclusively. Foil is just an operation name. It doesn't mean there aren't knife operations or other operations conducted outside that aren't called Foil.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Operation Foil is used by the NSW Police Force to target the possession of knives and other weapons in public places across the State. The operation targets young people in possession of knives in public and known violent young offenders with a view to an overall reduction of violence related incidents.

Operation Foil 1, 2 and 3 were conducted in September and December 2023.

Operation Foil 4 and 5 were conducted in April and July 2024.

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The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: That would be great to know. Could you tell me how many knife operations have been in Moree? Do we know how many have been done in Moree over the last year?

KAREN WEBB: We'll have to take that on notice.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: If you're taking it on notice, perhaps we could get Moree, Dubbo, Bega, Cooma, Lismore—all the major regional centres. It would be great to know how many knife operations. Can we also get the results? How many knives and other weapons were confiscated as a result?

ANSWER

I am advised:

There have been three statewide operations targeting knife crimes in Moree, which resulted in:

Western Region

- Moree (New England PD): two (2) knives seized within operations, 11 knives seized outside of the operations.
- Dubbo (Orana Mid Western PD): 10 knives seized within operations, 27 knives seized outside of the operations.

Southern Region

From 1 August 2023 to 9 September 2024, three (3) Foil operations and several other initiatives to detect knives were carried out across the South Coast and Monaro Districts.

During this period, Bega and Cooma Sectors reported the following results:

- Bega (SC PD): eight (8) knife detections (including a baton);
- Cooma (Monaro PD): 17 knife detections.

Northern Region

Lismore (Richmond PD): whilst no specific operation has been conducted by Richmond PD within the last 12 months, all Northern Region districts have participated in three (3) statewide operations (Operation Foil), targeting knife crime and anti-social behaviour.

For the period between 26 September 2023 to 9 September 2024, Richmond PD records the confiscation/seizure of 38 knives and sharp/cutting instruments, broken down into the following categories:

- 27 x knife
- 3 x other sharp/cutting instrument
- 2 x butterfly knife
- 1 x cleaver
- 1 x flick knife
- 1 x glass cutter
- 1 x scissors
- 1 x sheath knife

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The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Were you involved with the purchase of tasers by the NSW Police Force?

PETER THURTELL: No.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Is there anybody who can assist me in terms of the time line that that took from the decision of when to purchase and how long it was until they were received?

DEAN SMITH: In terms of the procurement process—without going back and having a look at that—I would have to specifically take the time frame on notice. It would depend upon the

asset, the contract and all of those things that you are purchasing, the volume and the operation environment that it's coming into. Tasers was a lengthy procurement process, but in terms of "exactly", I would have to take that on notice.

ANSWER

I am advised:

The NSW Police Force Strategic Procurement and its Armoury were involved in the process of purchasing the tasers. Testing and trialling of devices commenced in April 2020, with the development of a business case and budget approvals concluding in October 2022. The new T7 devices were delivered from July 2022.

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Ms CATE FAEHRMANN: Commissioner, I want to get your views on a situation in Kings Cross at a club that has contacted me regarding the licensing division within Kings Cross Local Area Command. The club is Club 77. They operate on William Street. They've started putting on, I understand, something called Sundays at 77. They've had a lot of issues with the Kings Cross licensing division, which they say has been trying to, for all intents and purposes, almost close them down for some time. I'm just wondering whether any of the commissioners here are aware of that. Who would largely deal with licensing?

PETER THURTELL: Kings Cross certainly comes under me. I'm not aware of it. I'll take it on notice.

Ms CATE FAEHRMANN: The owner of Club 77 is telling me that, for example, he has been told by one of the officers—I'm happy to give you the names of some of the officers—"Why are you doing an event like this? It's not worth it. Why are you wasting our time on this?" This is a Sunday daytime into Sunday evening event for hospitality workers and what have you. I've spoken to the owner of Club 77 a number of times, who says to me that he has quite a few records of different incidents of the officers in Kings Cross treating him and his venue with disrespect. I just wanted to get your views on that. Commissioner, from your perspective, we have feedback that the biggest thing that is holding back Sydney and Sydney's night-time economy from thriving—people going out late, venues staying open—is the attitude of the police. Have you heard that feedback yourself?

KAREN WEBB: No, I haven't. In fact, I went to a meeting just this week with Ministers and other Government members about the night-time economy and how we will work with those stakeholders in their efforts to get the night-time economy going.

Ms CATE FAEHRMANN: Does it concern you to hear that? And this isn't an isolated incident. The owner of this particular venue says that other owners of other venues regularly complain about the attitude of the police. The relatively new Government came in making a big deal of trying to get-night life going, but it really does sound like Kings Cross police continue to crack down on venues that are actually trying to stay open and make the most of it.

KAREN WEBB: I accept that that's what you've been told. As has been said, I can't answer your questions directly on those issues and will have to take those on notice.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Kings Cross Police Area Command within the Central Metropolitan Region deal with licensing at Club 77. The NSW Police Force is involved in the Vibrancy Reforms Monitoring and Evaluation and is working with government agencies to restore vibrancy to NSW.

The Club 77 has a licence condition that documents a time restriction. The Licensee can make an application to remove any condition.

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Ms CATE FAEHRMANN: Deputy Commissioner Thurtell, can I ask whether you're aware of the difference, in terms of liquor licence conditions, between live entertainment and DJ entertainment? Are they separate things or the same things?

PETER THURTELL: I'd have to take that on notice as well.

Ms CATE FAEHRMANN: You haven't worked in that space?

PETER THURTELL: No.

ANSWER

I am advised:

According to Liquor and Gaming NSW (L&GNSW), "A 'live music performance' is an event where one or more persons are engaged to play or perform live or pre-recorded music in person".

Previously under the Liquor Regulations (repealed in March 2021 with dissolution of the lock out laws);

C.102 (13) Liquor Regulations (Repealed in March 2021)

live entertainment means—

(a) an event at which one or more persons are engaged to play or perform live or pre-recorded music, or

(b) a performance at which the performers (or at least some of them) are present in person.

As a DJ set involves the DJ being employed by the venue to play pre-recorded music and curating the set for the crowd, this meets the criteria for live performance. Live entertainment and DJ entertainment is essentially treated the same, under the banner of live performance within the Vibrancy reforms.

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Ms CATE FAEHRMANN: Commissioner, if I can go back to the questions I was asking earlier today around the Early Drug Diversion Initiative, could you talk us through how you and the Police Force are rolling that out through the local area commands and how you're ensuring that all the officers know that that's an option for them?

KAREN WEBB: Thanks for the opportunity, because we were able to clarify some of that information you talked about. Mr Thurtell can update the Committee on that.

PETER THURTELL: Since 29 February this year, a police education training environment micro learn package has been delivered for officers statewide. A memorandum has been issued to commanders regarding the new EDDI scheme.

Ms CATE FAEHRMANN: When was that issued?

PETER THURTELL: The micro learn?

Ms CATE FAEHRMANN: The memorandum.

PETER THURTELL: I don't have the date, I'm sorry. But it was, I believe, post-29 February.

Ms CATE FAEHRMANN: Could you take that on notice to provide?

PETER THURTELL: If you like. Do you want me to keep going?

Ms CATE FAEHRMANN: Yes.

ANSWER

I am advised:

The NSW Police Force issued two Nemesis messages on 20 February 2024, and shortly after on 1 March 2024, advising that the Early Drug Diversion Initiative (EDDI) commenced on 29 February 2024.

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The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL: I might stick with you if I can, Deputy Commissioner Pisanos. I would like a general update—and I've asked about this before—about Operation Mongoose and where you are up to with the rural and regional. You are probably not surprised I was going to ask it, but I'm just wondering if there are any updates in terms of that work, and arrests, and the like.

PAUL PISANOS: Again, I'm going to have to go back to my more bespoke filing system, if that's okay. I will talk about Mongoose in terms of western region, northern region and southern, holistically. If I need to, I can break them down. Between 26 September 2023 and 26 August 2024, a combined—west, north, south—Operation Regional Mongoose response has investigated 940 break-and-enters and 845 stolen vehicle offences that have been reported. We have arrested and charged 464 individuals, of which 294 were juveniles, issuing 1,407 court attendance notices, consisting of 3,403 offences. Four hundred and fifty-five CANs, court attendance notices, were issued for breach of bail offences and 44.26 per cent of persons charged were on bail for other offences at the time they were charged.

The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL: Sorry, 46 that was?

PAUL PISANOS: Yes. I can break that down into regions, if you need to.

The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL: Could you, maybe on notice, provide it broken down in regions, if that is easier? The figures around break-and-enter and vehicle theft—that was over almost a 12-month period. Is that an increase, compared to data in previous years?

PAUL PISANOS: Definitely it's an increase in aggravated break-and-enters in regional. I can take it on notice and come back to you with the specifics, but we'll have to look at probably the BOCSAR data for that.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Operation Mongoose by Region:

Northern Region:

- Between 26 September 2023 to 9 September 2024, Operation Regional Mongoose has:
 - Investigated 411 break and enters and 401 stolen vehicles
 - Arrested and charged 259 individuals (of which 182 were juveniles), issuing 1,039 Court Attendance Notices consisting of 2469 offences
 - Issued 309 Court Attendance Notices for Judicial offences
 - 43% of persons charged by Regional Mongoose were on bail for other offences at the time they were charged.

Western Region:

- Between 26 September 2023 to 9 September 2024, Operation Regional Mongoose recorded:
 - Investigated 688 break and enters and 607 stolen vehicles
 - Arrested 214 individuals (of which 141 were juveniles), charged with 812 Court Attendance Notices consisting of 2,300 offences

- Issued 401 Court Attendance Notices for breach of bail offences
- 51.11% of persons charged were on bail for other offences at the time they were charged.

Southern Region:

- Between 26 September 2023 to 9 September 2024, Operation Regional Mongoose has:
 - Investigated 104 break and enters and 49 stolen vehicles.
 - Arrested and charged 54 individuals (of which 44 were juveniles) issuing 287 CANs issued consisting of 324 offences.
 - Southern Region did not record breach of bail offences.
 - Southern Region data relating to percentage of persons charged by Regional Mongoose who were on bail for other offences at the time they were charged was not recorded.

No data for Mongoose exists in the preceding 12 months for analysis as the operation commenced on 26 September 2023. Data to assist analysis collated by respective regions is as per below:

Northern Region:

- 1/09/2022 to 31/08/2023:
 - 7,588 BES (dwelling and non-dwelling) and 4,115 SMV (vehicle theft).
- 1/09/2023 - 31/08/2024:
 - 8,192 BES and 4,673 SMV - (8% increase BES); (13% increase SMV) from preceding year.

Western Region:

- 10/09/2022 to 09/09/2023:
 - 5,404 BES and 1,982 SMV
- 10/09/2023 to 09/09/2024:
 - 5,220 BES (decrease of 184); 1702 SMV (decrease of 280)

Southern Region

- 9/09/2022 to 09/09/2023:
 - 3,883 BES and 1,728 SMV
- 9/09/2023 to 09/09/2024:
 - 4,092 BES (increase of 209 incidents (5.4%) on the previous 12 months)
 - 2,037 SMV (increase of 309 incidents (18%) on the previous 12 months)

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PAUL PISANOS: I'm going to take the number of engagements on notice because I'm not going to sit here going through this folder.

The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL: That would be good.

PAUL PISANOS: I know they're in there. Needless to say, I can say that there have been thousands of individual engagements across regions. By engagements, I mean potentially an engagement at a local level, at a community level, a local government level, with multicultural communities across New South Wales and also our First Nations Aboriginal communities in both metro and regional. It's a way of us basically recording in terms of our interactions and the business that we do—it doesn't necessarily translate into a COPS event, like an event or an incident we respond to. This is a way of us capturing our outputs in terms of that holistic community engagement and also the outcomes. It measures

outcomes in relation to what we're getting and driving through that meeting or engagement in terms of an outcome. It's been in play for a bit over 12 months and it's been taken up holistically across the whole organisation from the local level to a regional level in terms of the things that we do as police that aren't necessarily captured in the response to a job. It's about keeping communities safe. It's about engaging with our broader community. It's been a phenomenal success.

The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL: If you can provide on notice whatever data you have?

PAUL PISANOS: I know I have them.

ANSWER

I am advised:

In the 35 PACs and PDs, with a high population of Aboriginal people, the NSW Police Force Aboriginal Engagement Officers (AEO) are assigned leadership roles within the Command to ensure close connection between the local police and members of the local Aboriginal community.

An AEO is a commissioned police officer at the rank of Inspector and is competent in the delivery of the NSWPF's training packages discussed above. The AEO works closely with the Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer (ACLO) in engaging with local Aboriginal communities and supporting the Aboriginal Strategic Direction Crime Prevention Grants program. This program provides funding to prevent, divert and promote community safety initiatives. The initiatives identify and promote innovative ways of decreasing crime, the fear of crime, address over-representation of Aboriginal people in the criminal justice system and work toward building safer communities.

The NSW Police Force regularly partners with other agencies to provide community events to positively engage with Aboriginal communities. There are 97 Police Aboriginal Consultative Committees (PACC) which meet four times a year. These meetings are attended by police, local government and non-government agencies, and members of the local Aboriginal community. They provide an opportunity for local Aboriginal people to raise issues and concerns in relation to crime and policing within their community.

Additionally, these PACs/PDs are required to submit annual Aboriginal Community Profiles and Action Plans, which are a critical source of information to police in ensuring a professional delivery of service to the Aboriginal community in local areas.

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The Hon. ROD ROBERTS: But you did call them faceless cowards, correct?

KAREN WEBB: Like I said a minute ago, I'll have to get the record to get the context— whether that's a word I actually used, or someone interpreted what I said.

The Hon. ROD ROBERTS: You're not suggesting Cydonee Mardon, who does the best puff pieces for you ever, would misquote you, would you? Here's the article here.

KAREN WEBB: I don't know. I'll have to take that on notice.

The Hon. ROD ROBERTS: Take it on notice, then. That'd be great. As Commissioner of Police, you should be aware if there's nothing to see, there's nothing to see. If there's nothing to complain about, there's nothing to complain about. But clearly the stuff I've been told, when we look at the totality of it, there's some veracity to it. We're not on a mere fishing expedition. Let's move on. I've only got a minute left. Deputy Commissioner Pisanos, were you involved in the culling of applicants for the promotion of superintendent when Don Forbes was one of the applicants?

PAUL PISANOS: I was, sir, yes.

ANSWER

I am advised:

When speaking with the Daily Telegraph, the Commissioner of Police did not use the words "faceless cowards" to refer to those who make legitimate complaints or report misconduct through the appropriate channels.

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Ms SUE HIGGINSON: That's okay. You were recovering, I think it's called.

PAUL PISANOS: I was recovering emotionally and psychologically, absolutely.

Ms SUE HIGGINSON: It's understandable. Everyone at ease; it's my turn. How many Aboriginal engagement officers are currently employed by the NSW Police Force?

PAUL PISANOS: As in AEOs?

Ms SUE HIGGINSON: Yes.

PAUL PISANOS: We're talking about inspectors—Aboriginal engagement officers at PACs and PDs?

Ms SUE HIGGINSON: Yes.

PAUL PISANOS: I'm going to take that away and get you an accurate figure.

Ms SUE HIGGINSON: Thank you, I would be very grateful. How many future locally based Aboriginal awareness training sessions are currently scheduled, and in which area command, district command and police districts? If you want to take that on notice?

PAUL PISANOS: I will, but needless to say a rollout of focused, localised training in terms of cultural awareness is a major focus for us under the new Aboriginal Strategic Direction. Let me come back to you with the details of when things are scheduled.

ANSWER

I am advised:

As at 15 September 2024, there are 58 Authorised Admin Positions, which includes Aboriginal Community Liaison Officers (ACLO) and 55 Admin Officer headcount.

Aboriginal Community Liaison Officers	#Authorised Admin Positions	#Admin Officer Headcount
Central Metro	4	3
Eastern Beaches	1	
Inner West	1	1
Leichhardt	1	1
South Sydney	1	1
North West Metro	3	3
Blacktown	1	1
Mt Druitt	1	1

Nepean	1	1
Northern	14	14
Coffs/Clarence	2	1
Lake Macquarie	1	1
Manning/Great Lakes	2	2
Mid North Coast	3	3
Port Stephens-Hunter	1	1
Richmond	3	3
Tuggerah Lakes	1	1
Tweed/Byron	1	2
South West Metro	3	3
Campbelltown City	3	3
Southern	8	7
Lake Illawarra	1	1
Murray River	2	1
Murrumbidgee	2	2
Riverina	1	1
South Coast	2	2
Western	26	25
Barrier	6	6
Central North	6	6
Central West	2	2
Chifley	1	1
New England	5	4
Orana Mid Western	4	4
Oxley	2	2
Grand Total	58	55

Please note that this does not include one Aboriginal Coordinator and one Aboriginal Training Coordinator located within Capability Performance and Youth Command.

Ms SUE HIGGINSON: Could you give me an update on where the NRL supporter program is at, and how many children are currently enrolled in that program?

PAUL PISANOS: Are you talking about operation pathfinder that was launched at Moree?

Ms SUE HIGGINSON: Yes.

PAUL PISANOS: Can I take that on notice, ma'am, just for the specifics? It's ongoing and it's still happening in terms of those small levels of mentoring.

ANSWER

I am advised:

The Project Pathfinder pilot ran in 2024 with two separate cohorts, across four 'intakes'. Each intake of young people participate in the program which is run across five phases.

- Phase 1 and 2: Initial engagement and game day experience
- Phase 3: Ongoing NRL mentorship
- Phase 4: Graduation event
- Phase 5: Evaluation

Under the pilot, phases 1 and 2 were offered in differing formats across the four intakes which included differing intake sizes, both club based and NRL led programs, and amended program activities. Each format will be reviewed at the conclusion of the program to formulate a consistent program framework for future cohorts.

These formats are listed below.

- Cohort 1/Intake 1 – 18-22 March 2024: 3 x young people (16yo female from Lightning Ridge, 13yo female from Bourke, 15yo male from Moree). NRL led program based in Sydney Olympic Park. NRL mentors: NRWL player Quincy Dodd and Ex-NRL player Bryson Goodwin.
- Cohort 2/Intake 2 – 10-13 July 2024: 6 x young people (3 female, 3 male, 10-16 years old). NRL led program based in Cronulla (partnered with Cronulla Sharks NRL club). NRL mentors: Ex-NRL players Brad Takairangi and Joseph Paulo.
- Cohort 2/Intake 3 – 17-20 July 2024: 2 x young people (2 males 15yo and 17yo). Club based program led by the Canberra Raiders in Canberra. NRL Mentors: NRLW players Grace Kemp and Sophie Holyman.
- Cohort 2/Intake 4 – 28-31 August 2024: 2 x young people (2 males from Dubbo, 14yo and 16yo). Club based program led by the Penrith Panthers in Penrith. NRL mentor: Ex-NRL player Joseph Paulo.

A total of 13 young people from regional NSW commenced the Project Pathfinder program in 2024. Of these, 12 young people remain engaged with the program. The 13-year-old female from Bourke who commenced in cohort 1 formally withdrew from the program in August 2024, but had been disengaged from the program since May 2024.

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Ms SUE HIGGINSON: My time is up, but perhaps if you could provide on notice some of the things that have changed, and what you are doing around mitigating the possibility of unlawful searches of children. Is that something that you could provide to us about material things that you've done?

KAREN WEBB: Yes.

ANSWER

I am advised:

There are legislative safeguard requirements that police must comply with when conducting strip searches. The safeguards are about preserving the person's privacy and dignity and ensuring that the interests of young people are protected. Where possible in the circumstances, additional safeguards exist to ensure that when a young person is searched, it must occur in the presence of the young person's parent or guardian.

In response to the recommendations of the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission (LECC) report, the NSW Police Force (NSWPF) has made a number of changes to policies around searches and strip searches. There is extensive oversight of strip searches, including by the NSWPF Professional Standards Command, the LECC, the NSW Coroner and NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal.

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The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Commissioner, do all police commands operate with a domestic violence liaison officer?

KAREN WEBB: They have domestic violence liaison officer positions. Whether they are occupied or not at this point in time, I couldn't tell you. But certainly, in locations that I have been to, there are more than one officer performing those roles. In some locations there are sergeants performing that role with a team.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: I wonder if you could take on notice and provide us with information about what the status of the domestic violence liaison officers in each command is as at today's date—whether there is a vacancy, whether the officer is on leave and if there is a vacancy, the length of that vacancy. It would also be good to have that information as well please.

KAREN WEBB: I might not be able to give you leave, unless it's long-term leave. That might not be available. But, certainly, occupancy and vacancies I can give you.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: And length of vacancy, if there is one?

KAREN WEBB: If I can give you that, I will.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Are there specialised units or officers dedicated to handling domestic violence cases within the Police Force?

KAREN WEBB: In terms of—I'm sorry?

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Say there's a domestic violence liaison officer in a command. Are there specialist units that operate? There's a homicide unit. Is there a domestic violence unit?

KAREN WEBB: We've got a DV registry that is basically the head of profession in terms of our policies and practice review of domestic violence matters from the statewide perspective. That unit also includes—and I will go to Mr Thurtell in a minute—a training cell. It then has a psychologist attached to it. It's got a whole range of resources. At region-based levels, there are what we call DV high-risk offender teams that primarily lock up DV offenders.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: I wonder if you could give me some information about whether, because of staff shortages, domestic violence liaison officers or specialist domestic violence staff have had to be diverted to other duties.

KAREN WEBB: I'll have to take that on notice, but it's one of my priorities, so it would be unlikely. But in some cases that might have been necessary.

ANSWER

I am advised:

All police positions attached to Police Districts (PDs) and Police Area Commands (PACs) are flexible resources available to respond to incidents across the PD/PAC. Further, those local resources are supplemented by specialist police (highway patrol, major crime squads, covert resources etc) who are managed centrally but can be deployed across boundaries to meet changing crime patterns, emerging issues and community need.

The NSW Police Force has analysed the roster data of police officers who are substantively in Domestic Violence Officers, Domestic Violence Operatives and Domestic Violence Team Leader positions between 30 June 2024 and 31 August 2024 (excluding in the Capability, Performance Youth Command Domestic and Family Violence Registry and other support staff).

It should be noted that First Response duties often involve responding to Domestic and Family Violence related matters.

As at 8 September 2024	#Authorised Police Positions	#Police Officer Headcount	#Vacant Authorised Police Positions
Central Metro	22	21	1
Eastern Beaches	3	3	
Eastern Suburbs PAC	2	2	
Inner West PAC	3	3	
Kings Cross	1		1
Leichhardt	1	1	
South Sydney PAC	2	2	
St George PAC	4	4	
Surry Hills	1	1	
Sutherland Shire PAC	4	4	
Sydney City PAC	1	1	
North West Metro	19	16	4
Blacktown	1	2	
Blue Mountains	1	1	
Hawkesbury	3	1	2
Kuring Gai	1	1	
Mt Druitt	2	2	
Nepean PAC	2	2	
North Shore PAC	2	1	1
Northern Beaches PAC	2	1	1
Parramatta	2	2	
Riverstone PAC	1	1	
Ryde PAC	1	1	
The Hills	1	1	
Northern	19	18	1

Brisbane Water	1		1
Coffs/Clarence	4	4	
Hunter Valley PD	2	2	
Lake Macquarie	2	2	
Manning/Great Lakes	1	1	
Mid North Coast	1	1	
Newcastle City PD	2	2	
Port Stephens-Hunter PD	2	2	
Richmond	1	1	
Tuggerah Lakes	2	2	
Tweed/Byron	1	1	
South West Metro	26	26	5
Auburn PAC	2	2	
Bankstown	1	1	
Burwood PAC	2	2	
Camden PAC	3	4	
Campbelltown City PAC	6	6	2
Campsie	2	2	1
Cumberland PAC	2	2	
Fairfield City PAC	4	3	1
Liverpool City PAC	4	4	1
Southern	19	21	1
Lake Illawarra	2	2	
Monaro PD	1	1	
Murray River PD	3	2	1
Murrumbidgee PD	2	3	
Riverina PD	2	3	
South Coast PD	4	4	
The Hume PD	3	4	
Wollongong	2	2	
Western	11	12	1
Barrier PD	2	1	1
Central North PD	1	1	
Central West PD	2	2	
Chifley PD	2	3	
New England PD	1	1	
Orana Mid Western PD	2	3	
Oxley PD	1	1	
Grand Total	116	114	13

Note: The dataset above only includes Domestic Violence Officers in Metro Field Operations and Regional NSW Field Operations. It excludes DV Operatives, DV Team Leaders, and DV Leadership/Support roles in CPYC DFV Registry.

Below is a breakdown of the Vacant Authorised Police Positions and by the number of months they have been vacant for. Most of the vacancies are recent and is less than six months.

#Vacant Authorised Police Positions						
As at 8 September 2024	< 01 month	01-03 months	04-06 months	07-12 months	12-24 months	Grand Total
Central Metro	1					1
Kings Cross	1					1
North West Metro	1	1	1		1	4
Hawkesbury	1				1	2
North Shore			1			1
Northern Beaches		1				1
Northern				1		1
Brisbane Water				1		1
South West Metro	1	1	2	1		5
Campbelltown City	1		1			2
Campsie			1			1
Fairfield City				1		1
Liverpool City		1				1
Southern	1					1
Murray River	1					1
Western			1			1
Barrier			1			1
Grand Total	4	2	4	2	1	13

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The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: If you could take that on notice and provide that information, that would be good. Commissioner, are you aware of the campaign by Tabitha Acret, who lost her daughter to domestic violence and raises the issue of, in smaller rural settings, the difficulty sometimes of reporting domestic violence to the police if, for example, the abuser is on the same footy team as the police officer to whom they report? Have you given some consideration to this situation and how the situation can be eased for women experiencing domestic violence?

KAREN WEBB: Certainly, towns that I'm aware of that have DV support services is another avenue. Going to the police in the first instance is not the only option available for victims. I know that through some DV services, they can facilitate some other connection with the police where they have some concerns about that, for example. So there are mechanisms to mitigate that risk. But I don't know the Acret matter specifically, so if there are specific questions, I'll have to take them on notice.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: It's more the campaign that comes out of the death of her daughter and the situation where you have towns that don't have those specialist domestic violence services and what can be done in those towns.

KAREN WEBB: Certainly, where there are police officers, they're trained to respond to domestic violence, but within a police area command or police district, at the head station, there would be domestic violence liaison officers that are available.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: I think the issue is in small communities it may be difficult to report to, effectively, a friend of the abuser. What can be done in those situations? Is it possible for a domestic violence service to be established in every town so it's not luck of the draw if the abuser plays snooker every Friday with the police sergeant?

KAREN WEBB: I'll have to take on notice if there are tools available on our website, for example, or other means by which victims can find a path where they have those concerns.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: If those tools are available, is it possible to have them widely publicised so victims are aware of them?

KAREN WEBB: That's what I'm saying. Hopefully they're on our website or some other public-facing site.

ANSWER

I am advised:

All employees of the NSW Police Force must adhere to a strict Code of Conduct and Ethical Practice to uphold the organisation's values and comply with all policies. In addition, NSWPF employees must comply with the Standards of Professional Conduct when interacting with members of the public and in all other duties. This ensures the NSW Police Force provides the community with fair and impartial services, maintain public confidence and declare any conflict of interest.

The NSW Police Force strongly encourages all victims of domestic and family violence (DFV) to come forward and report instances of DFV to police, so they receive protection via the justice system through for example, Apprehended Domestic Violence Orders (ADVO), criminal charges, prosecutorial proceedings as well as the impending electronic monitoring laws for offenders on bail for serious domestic violence offences. In addition, reporting DFV allows the NSW Police Force to connect victim survivors with appropriate support services, which is imperative for their physical and psychological safety as well as recovery.

Police District

For victim survivors in rural or other community settings concerned about reporting DFV to their local police station, it is recommended that the victim survivor contact their local Police District office. Police District contact details can be found on the NSW Police Force website.

By contacting the Police District, the victim survivor has the opportunity to connect with an independent police officer.

DFV matters involving police officers as a party to the matter (defendant or victim)

In instances where a police officer is involved in a DFV matter, police must follow all relevant policies and procedures to manage any identified conflicts of interest. In the DFV standard operating procedures (SOPs), police are instructed to treat these incidents as they would when investigating any other DFV incident and make decisions based on the need to demonstrate the utmost transparency and impartiality during all phases of the investigation. The DFV SOPs dictate that these matters be managed with higher-level oversight. This includes if charges are being considered and ADVOs are applied for naming the police officer as the defendant.

Support services

Of note, the Legal Aid NSW funded Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service (WDVCAS) offers free services for women experiencing DFV anywhere in NSW. WDVCAS are available statewide. They provide women with information to assist safety planning,

provide support in the court process and deliver education about local services including housing and financial support.

Rapid Video Response

The NSW Police Force is continuously striving for enhanced police–victim interactions and support. As part of this endeavour, the NSW Police Force is considering the introduction of Rapid Video Response (RVR), which is a virtual policing service that allows victim-survivors to speak with police via video link instead of in person. RVR will increase timeliness, accessibility, safeguard victim survivors and enhance victim experience. The NSW Police Force has access to RVR via the BluLink platform as part of its DFV Reform Project and the overarching goal of improving service delivery to DFV victims. Amongst other things, RVR provides access for victim survivors that fear reprisals and/or are hesitant to attend police station.

Co-location

The NSW Police Force is piloting a collaborative co-location initiative with WDVCS in ten police stations statewide. A WDVCS support worker is in each of these stations as an early intervention and response initiative to optimise support for DFV victim survivors. A formal program evaluation is being undertaken by the University of Wollongong and the final report will be tabled in early 2025. WDVCS is accessible through the co-location pilot program and independently of the NSW Police Force.

Empower You

To support victim survivors and provide them with greater agency, the NSW Police Force launched the 'Empower You' mobile device application in July 2023.

Features of the 'Empower You' application include the ability to record 'diary entries' of DFV incidents including photos, videos and audio files. It also has the capacity to share 'diary entries' via email with the victim themselves or a third party, such as NSW Police Force. The app contains information on DFV, including how to report incidents to police and the court process. To date, the application has been downloaded approximately 22,000 times and has been utilised in a small number of prosecutions.

Sexual Assault Reporting Option (SARO)

For adult victim-survivors of sexual assault, SARO is an online portal that enables the reporting of sexual assault to police without having further contact with police or instigating a formal investigation. SARO is written in a trauma-sensitive manner and is available in 12 languages. SARO reports can be made anonymously, or the victim-survivor can elect to be identified but request that police do not contact them, or only do so in specified circumstances. For example, if another victim of the same offender comes forward.

For a variety of reasons, victim-survivors of sexual violence often do not wish to speak with police about the sexual assault, or go through the legal process, but would like the information recorded. SARO was implemented to allow victim-survivors of sexual violence a degree of control over their level and manner of contact with police.

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The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: I wonder whether we need something more than simply being on a website, because if somebody is in distress, they don't always sit down and calmly scroll through a website to find the various pages that they're looking for. If I could take you to the Bail and Other Legislation Amendment (Domestic Violence) Bill 2024, there is a higher threshold for bail in relation to domestic violence. For accused who are not granted bail, will they be held in police cells or will they be held in remand facilities?

KAREN WEBB: That's a piece of work that remains ongoing. In fact, this week I've been having discussions with the secretary of DCJ around managing the workload so as not to

have any unintended consequences for police, in terms of managing those refused bail in police custody any longer than we have to. So that's still an ongoing piece of work.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: When do you anticipate that piece of work would be finished?

KAREN WEBB: I think the Government are still talking about what is workable without setting up everyone to fail. We have requested either a staged implementation or a delayed implementation.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Do you have any timeline from the Government about expected implementation?

KAREN WEBB: Not yet. That was a discussion I had this week.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: You're requesting either a staged or a delayed implementation. Would a staged implementation be different for regions and city areas? Mr Hudson, do you have something to add about this?

DAVID HUDSON: I think the commissioner is referring to the process for centralised bail courts on weekends, which she spoke to the secretary about. There is a working group that we represent on in relation to the implementation of the new bail laws in relation to DV, including electronic monitoring. Those discussions are ongoing still.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: You don't have any timeline on that?

DAVID HUDSON: We're not establishing that timeline. I sent a file to Mr Thurtell about some input from the DV registry. Police Prosecutions are currently representing, but there are some operational decisions that have to be made about the extent of what exclusion zones should be for electronic monitoring from a premises. Prosecutors are not best placed to answer that; operational police need to.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: That working group is dealing with both remand and electronic monitoring?

DAVID HUDSON: Yes.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Who are the parties on that working group?

DAVID HUDSON: I'm not a member. I'd have to get back to you, but I know from a police point of view -

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Could you take that on notice and provide information?

ANSWER

I am advised:

The Cabinet Office is leading an implementation taskforce that includes membership from the Department of Communities and Justice, relevant policy areas and court representatives, Corrections, NSW Police Force and Legal Aid. On average, the taskforce has been meeting fortnightly.

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The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL: Do you have any data in terms of the most recent statistics on the number of reported stock thefts in regional New South Wales?

PAUL PISANOS: I do, but it's going to require some shuffling.

The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL: I'm happy for you to provide it on notice.

PAUL PISANOS: I definitely will.

The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL: What I am after is—and I might just list them—reported stock thefts in regional New South Wales, reported firearm thefts from rural properties and reported fuel thefts from rural properties.

PAUL PISANOS: I can definitely provide you with some contemporary data. The firearm theft issue is captured under an operation called Operation Armour. That is managed by a committee. It is obviously taken very seriously.

The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL: Could you just provide whatever data you can on notice?

PAUL PISANOS: That is no problem.

The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL: And the same data for the previous year as well, if that's possible, just to make a comparison?

PAUL PISANOS: That is no problem.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Reported stock thefts in NSW:

- During August 2022 to July 2023, a total of 255 stock theft incidents were recorded on COPS. During August 2023 to July 2024, a total of 194 stock theft incidents were recorded on COPS.
- This is a 24% decrease in the number of stock theft incidents reported to the NSW Police Force during this 12-month comparison.
- Comparing the same period, there has been a 40% decrease in the head of cattle reported stolen and 26% decrease in the head of sheep reported stolen.

Reported firearm thefts from rural properties:

- During August 2022 to July 2023, a total of 26 firearm theft incidents from rural properties were recorded on COPS.
- During August 2023 to July 2024, a total of 42 firearm theft incidents from rural properties were recorded on COPS.
- This is a 62% increase in the number of firearms thefts, from rural properties, reported to the NSW Police Force during this 12-month comparison.
- Operation Armour II targets firearm theft and is a statewide operation. The Rural Crime Prevention Team significantly contributes to this operation in support of Police Districts.

Reported fuel thefts from rural properties:

- During August 2022 to July 2023, a total of 89 fuel theft incidents from rural properties were recorded on COPS.
- During August 2023 to July 2024, a total of 84 fuel theft incidents from rural properties were recorded on COPS.
- This is a 6% decrease in the number of fuel theft incidents from rural properties, reported to NSW Police during this 12-month comparison.

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The Hon. ROD ROBERTS: Was it advertised in iworkfor.nsw.gov.au?

PAUL PISANOS: Mr Roberts, I left it with the business manager of Professional Standards to manage the process.

The Hon. ROD ROBERTS: Was it an understrength position that needed funding allocated to it?

PAUL PISANOS: No, I don't think that was the case at all. I'd have to take it on notice, but I did leave it to the business manager to manage the recruitment process.

The Hon. ROD ROBERTS: How about you do take it on notice, because I've been told that you personally signed off on the allocation of funds for her position and that then you signed off later on for an extension of the time and, as we know, she's an associate of your wife. Again, we're coming back to this perception of "jobs for the boys"—in fact, in this case, "jobs for the girls". Take it on notice and come back to the Committee whether you signed off the allocation of funds to fund that position that was never filled before.

PAUL PISANOS: It was to backfill a Grade 7A position.

The Hon. ROD ROBERTS: Take it on notice.

PAUL PISANOS: I definitely signed off as the commander of PSE, but the process was managed by my business manager. It was managed transparently.

The Hon. ROD ROBERTS: You told your business manager that, "My wife and her used to work together at the Police Association"?

PAUL PISANOS: I absolutely disclosed that I knew and she was available and she was available to work.

The Hon. ROD ROBERTS: And when you knew she and she was available and she was available to work, did you say, "We better just put this out to the general public and advertise it to see if there is a better candidate at all?"

PAUL PISANOS: I left the process to the business manager.

The Hon. ROD ROBERTS: What happened? Was it advertised?

PAUL PISANOS: Mr Roberts, I can't answer that because I left the process—

The Hon. ROD ROBERTS: You can take it on notice and answer it, though—very similar to the commissioner, who is ultimately responsible for everything, you're responsible for what happened in the Professional Standards Command. How about you report back to us exactly the details, step by step, that led to getting that position, including who signed off on the funding?

PAUL PISANOS: What do you mean by "the funding"?

The Hon. ROD ROBERTS: Her position had to be funded is what I've been told. Wasn't it?

PAUL PISANOS: It was backfilled.

The Hon. ROD ROBERTS: Take it on notice, Mr Pisanos.

PAUL PISANOS: Will do.

The Hon. ROD ROBERTS: Be careful you don't say anything that you're going to regret.

PAUL PISANOS: Will do.

ANSWER

I am advised:

The first position referred to is a Clerk 7/8 Research Officer (SAP Number 51179621) was established in 2014 and had allocated recurrent funding from that date.

This position was created and funded in 2014 prior to Deputy Commissioner Paul Pisanos commencing his role as Assistant Commissioner in the NSW Police Force Professional Standards Command. The position was substantively filled multiple times and was occupied when Mr Pisanos approved a temporary request to backfill the role while the substantive occupant was in another role.

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The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Are there any matters under investigation currently that may proceed to prosecution under 93Z?

DAVID HUDSON: I'll have to get back to you on that. These matters are investigated across the State. They're no centralised so any command can lay a charge. I'm unaware of individual investigations for hate crime.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Would you have available any figures of the total number of prosecutions that the police have brought in relation to 93Z?

DAVID HUDSON: We referred 14 matters to the Department of Public Prosecutions. Three were returned to us. Two were proceeded with. Both were convicted at the Local Court and one was successful on appeal at the District Court earlier this year, so there is no conviction. The second person—similar matters. I think it was the Hindu-Sikh conflict they were charged under and the second one also appealed. However, his appeal was overturned and he remains convicted. Out of the 14, we have one conviction.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Do you see a need for a broadening of 93Z to include other protected attributes, such as sex work?

DAVID HUDSON: Such as?

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Sex work.

DAVID HUDSON: I'm sure that's a matter being considered by Mr Bathurst and the Law Reform Commission, if that's an issue.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: But it's not an issue that's been raised operationally in any matters that you've considered?

DAVID HUDSON: No. As I said, in the majority, or all cases, there are alternate processes. In fact, police unknowingly, knowing the requirement for DPP approval under subsection (4) of section 93Z before that was removed, charged people with it. Magistrates, ignorant of that fact as well, convicted people of it. When we found out, we had to withdraw the charges and withdraw those convictions. Those matters were then put back to the DPP, who advised us that they didn't support prosecution, even though they had been convicted.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: How many matters were in that category, Mr Hudson?

DAVID HUDSON: Two or three. I'll have to get back to you.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: If you could get back to me—

DAVID HUDSON: They go back two, three or a couple of years now.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: I understand. If it's possible to provide the names of the cases, I'd just be fascinated to read them.

DAVID HUDSON: I can do that. I'll take that on notice. We have those records.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Two s93Z charges were withdrawn and annulled in 2021.